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# Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

Max S. Baucus

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Senator \* or Department\*: **BAUCUS**

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Record Type\*: **Speeches & Remarks**

MONTH/YEAR of Records\*: **June-1984**

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(1) Subject\*: **Veterans**

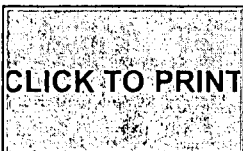
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject\* **The Veterans of Foreign Wars**

DOCUMENT DATE\*: **06/16/1984**

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\* "required information"



BAUCUS

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MAX BAUCUS  
THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

BILLINGS, MONTANA

JUNE 16, 1984

BILL WILSON, AL HOWARTH, LARRY LONGFELLOW, RAY PRICE, MARY SAUDERS, MEMBERS OF THE V.F.W., I AM PLEASED TO BE HERE WITH YOU TODAY.

IT IS PARTICULARLY FITTING THAT THIS CONVENTION BE TAKING PLACE DURING THE MONTH OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALLIED INVASION OF NORMANDY.

I AM ALWAYS PROUD TO ADDRESS VETERANS.

MONTANA'S CONTRIBUTION

BUT I AM PARTICULARLY PROUD TO ADDRESS MONTANA VETERANS.

WE IN MONTANA HAVE DONE MORE THAN OUR FAIR SHARE OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE SECURITY OF OUR COUNTRY.

PRESIDENT MCKINLEY ASKED 500 MONTANANS TO VOLUNTEER FOR THE SPANISH--AMERICAN WAR.

1,400 MONTANANS RESPONDED.

ONE OF THEM WAS JOE MONTGOMERY OF LEWISTOWN, WHO DIED A FEW

MONTHS AGO.

IN EVERY OTHER WAR SINCE THE ONE JOE FOUGHT IN, MONTANA HAS CONTINUED TO GIVE MORE THAN ITS EXPECTED SHARE OF SOLDIERS.

IN WORLD WAR I MONTANA CONTRIBUTED TWICE ITS PER CAPITA SHARE OF SOLDIERS. ONE OUT OF EVERY TEN WAS KILLED, WHICH WAS THE SECOND HIGHEST DEATH RATE OF ANY STATE IN THE UNION.

SIMILARLY, IN WORLD WAR II, THE PERCENTAGE OF MONTANANS WHO DIED IN ACTION WAS 50% GREATER THAN THE PERCENTAGE OF MONTANANS WHO WERE SERVING.

IN OUR MOST RECENT WAR, 259 MONTANANS DIED IN VIET NAM. AND 11 MONTANANS ARE STILL MISSING IN ACTION.

WE IN MONTANA ARE PROUD OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE REPRESENTED US IN THE ARMED SERVICES.

### MONTANA'S VETERANS

YOU VETERANS ARE THE BACKBONE OF THIS GREAT STATE.

WE OWE YOU SO MUCH FOR THE SACRIFICES YOU MADE SO THAT THIS NATION CAN REMAIN FREE.

I KNOW IT GOES AGAINST THE GRAIN FOR VETERANS TO CLAIM THEY ARE A SPECIAL BREED. BUT THEY ARE.

THE DEBT OUR NATION OWES YOU IS CONSIDERABLE. WE NEED TO ENSURE THAT THIS DEBT IS REPAID.

I BELIEVE AMERICA SHOULD REWARD VETERANS FOR THE TIME YOU SPENT IN FAR-OFF COUNTRIES, FIGHTING IN STRANGE CLIMATES, NOT KNOWING WHAT THE NEXT DAY WOULD BRING, SEPARATED FROM YOUR FAMILIES.

YOU PAID THE PRICE FOR AMERICA'S FREEDOM. YOU CAN BE PROUD OF THE ROLE YOU AND YOUR FELLOW VETERANS PLAYED ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

AND YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR YOUR BENEFITS AND YOUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM FROM THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE VETERANS PROGRAMS SCALED BACK.

I AM PROUD OF MY VOTING RECORD ON BEHALF OF VETERANS:

o IN 1980, I VOTED FOR A \$600 MILLION INCREASE IN FUNDING OF VETERANS PROGRAMS.

o IN 1981, I VOTED TO RESTORE \$300 MILLION OF PROPOSED CUTS IN VETERANS HEALTH SERVICES, AND I VOTED IN FAVOR OF TRANSFERRING \$104 MILLION FROM FOREIGN AID PROGRAMS TO VETERANS PROGRAMS.

o IN 1982, I VOTED TO PROVIDE A FULL COST OF LIVING

INCREASE FOR SERVICE CONNECTED DISABLED VETERANS.

O JUST LAST MONTH I AM PROUD TO HAVE VOTED FOR LEGISLATION WHICH PASSED THE SENATE WHICH PERMITS VETERANS COMPENSATION FOR WAR VICTIMS OF AGENT ORANGE POISONING. COMPENSATION WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED FOR ATOMIC VETERANS--THOSE WHO WERE EXPOSED TO IONIZING RADIATION IN THE TEST OF A NUCLEAR DEVICE OR DURING THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF HIROSHIMA OR NAGASAKI.

THAT LEGISLATION WILL HOPEFULLY PASS THE HOUSE AND BE SIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT LATER THIS YEAR.

✓ O AND JUST THIS WEEK I CO-SPONSORED AND VOTED FOR THE ARMSTRONG AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD RE-ACTIVATE THE G.I. BILL AND THEREBY RESTORE VETERAN EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS.

AS WE CONTINUE TO STAND BY THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED US IN THE PAST, WE CAN'T AFFORD TO NEGLECT THOSE WHO ARE SERVING US TODAY.

I AM CONCERNED, AND I KNOW YOU ARE CONCERNED, THAT WE AS A COUNTRY AREN'T DOING ENOUGH TO STAND BEHIND TODAY'S MILITARY PERSONNEL.

AND IT IS THAT TROUBLING DEVELOPMENT THAT I WANTED TO DISCUSS WITH YOU BRIEFLY TODAY.

BOLSTERING OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES

AS WE LOOK AROUND THE WORLD THERE ARE MANY "TROUBLE SPOTS"  
WE MUST BE CONCERNED ABOUT:

- O THE PERSIAN GULF
- O THE MIDDLE EAST
- O CENTRAL AMERICA

IN EACH OF THOSE AREAS, AND IN OTHERS, WE HAVE TO BE  
PREPARED TO DEFEND OUR INTERESTS:

- O TO RESCUE OUR CITIZENS
- O TO DISPLAY STRENGTH THROUGH A NAVAL PRESENCE, OR
- O TO SHOW OUR RESOLVE THROUGH JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES.

THESE MANEUVERS REQUIRE CAPABLE AND TRAINED SOLDIERS AS WE  
HAD WHEN YOU WERE SERVING OUR COUNTRY.

AND THEY REQUIRE DEPENDABLE EQUIPMENT, WEAPONS AND  
AMMUNITION TO SUPPORT THOSE PERSONNEL.

THESE ARE THE TWO BASIC ELEMENTS OF OUR "CONVENTIONAL  
FORCES".

AND IT'S THESE FORCES THAT PROVIDE US WITH THE CAPABILITY TO  
MEET THE CHALLENGES WE FACE TODAY.

UNFORTUNATELY, THAT CAPABILITY IS BEING THREATENED.

IT'S BEING THREATENED BECAUSE THIS COUNTRY IS NEGLECTING ITS  
CONVENTIONAL FORCES.

WE ARE SPENDING TOO LITTLE ON THE TRAINING AND SUPPORT OF  
OUR SOLDIERS.

NEXT YEAR'S DEFENSE BUDGET CALLS FOR A 37 PERCENT INCREASE  
IN NUCLEAR, STRATEGIC FORCES...

.. AND ONLY A 9 PERCENT INCREASE IN FUNDS FOR CONVENTIONAL  
FORCES.

THESE PRIORITIES ARE WRONG.

WE SHOULD BE SPENDING MORE ON OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES. WE  
NEED:

- O INCREASED NUMBERS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL
- O BETTER PAY SCALES FOR PERSONNEL
- O INCREASED FUNDING FOR TRAINING AND PREPAREDNESS
- O MORE AMMUNITION PROCUREMENT
- O INCREASED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SIMPLE AND  
EFFECTIVE COMBAT WEAPONS

I AM PROUD OF MY VOTING RECORD IN SUPPORT OF CONVENTIONAL  
FORCES:



o IN 1980 I VOTED AGAINST AN EFFORT TO SLASH ARMY PERSONNEL BY 25,000.

o IN 1981, I VOTED FOR AN ADDITIONAL 12,000 PERSONNEL FOR THE NAVY AND THE AIR FORCE AND AN ADDITIONAL \$148 MILLION FOR AMMUNITION PROCUREMENT.

o IN 1982, I VOTED IN SUPPORT OF THE C-5 AIRCRAFT, AND A FOURTH NIMITZ-CLASS AIRCRAFT CARRIER.

o AND IN 1983, I VOTED TO RESTORE \$582 MILLION OF PROPOSED CUTS IN READINESS AND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS CAPABILITIES AND TO ADD \$15.8 MILLION TO THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE.

o

ALL OF THESE COMPONENTS OF OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES NEED INCREASED FUNDING.

AND WE, AS AMERICANS, NEED TO GET BEHIND AN EFFORT TO GIVE THE FUNDING OF OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES A MUCH HIGHER PRIORITY.

#### BOLSTERING ALLIED PARTICIPATION

AS WE IMPROVE OUR CONVENTIONAL FORCES, WE HAVE TO INSURE THAT OUR ALLIES ARE DOING THE SAME.

WE HAVE ASSUMED A DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE OF OUR COMMON DEFENSE BURDEN.

OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES HAVE NOT LIVED UP TO THEIR COMMITMENT OF 3% REAL GROWTH IN DEFENSE SPENDING. THEY'VE PROVIDED 1% OR LESS.

THEIR LACK OF COMMITMENT IS OUTRAGEOUS AND FRIGHTENING.

IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT EUROPEAN AMMUNITION STOCKPILES MAY LAST ONLY 10 DAYS!

THE NEXT LINE OF DEFENSE WOULD BE NUCLEAR PERSHING MISSILES.

THAT MEANS OUR ALLIES FAILURE TO FUND CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS LEAVES US WITHIN 10 DAYS OF A NUCLEAR CONFLICT IN EUROPE.

THAT'S INTOLERABLE ... AND WE SHOULDN'T STAND FOR IT.

✓ THAT IS WHY JUST THIS WEEK I VOTED TO DECREASE OUR CONTRIBUTION TO N.A.T.O. UNLESS OUR ALLIES INCREASE THEIR LEVELS OF DEFENSE SPENDING.

THE DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES IS ONLY AS STRONG AS THE COMMON DEFENSE OF ALL THE FREE WORLD...

.. THEREFORE, IT'S ESSENTIAL THAT WE PRESSURE OUR ALLIES TO DO THEIR FAIR SHARE.

CONCLUSION

IT WAS FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT WHO SAID IN ONE OF HIS FIRESIDE

CHATS:

"WE BUILD AND DEFEND NOT FOR OUR GENERATION ALONE.

WE DEFEND THE FOUNDATION LAID BY OUR FATHERS.

WE BUILD A LIFE FOR GENERATIONS YET UNBORN".

TODAY, LET US RESOLVE TO DO BOTH:

LET US HONOR AND BE FAITHFUL TO YOU, WHO HAVE BUILT THAT FOUNDATION AND FOUGHT TO DEFEND IT.. WE CAN DO THAT BY CONTINUING OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR NATION'S VETERANS.

AND AS A TRIBUTE TO YOU LET US CONTINUE TO FOSTER THE LIBERTY WE ALL CHERISH. AND LET US STRENGTHEN OUR ABILITY TO DEFEND THE SOUND FOUNDATION YOU HAVE BEQUEATHED US.

IF WE DO, WE WILL BE WORTHY OF THE PROUD LEGACY YOU HAVE LEFT TO US.

THANK YOU. AND GOD BLESS YOU.